

Lateral view ♀

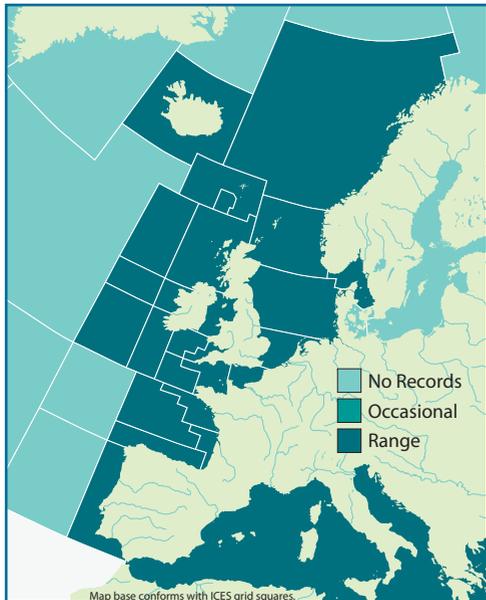
Ventral view ♀

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Galeorhinus galeus (Linnaeus, 1758).

DISTRIBUTION

Worldwide in temperate seas except western Atlantic and western Pacificⁱ. East Atlantic from Iceland to South Africaⁱⁱ, including the Mediterranean Sea^v.



COMMON NAME

TOPE, Soupfin Shark, School Shark, Flake, Greys shark, Penny's Dog, Schnapper Shark, Sharpie Shark, Sweet William Shark, Vitamin Shark, Requin-hâ (Fr), Cazón (Es).

IDENTIFICATION

- 1 Small second dorsal fin, same size as anal fin.
- 2 Second dorsal fin directly above anal fin.
- 3 Very large caudal lobeⁱⁱⁱ.

COLOUR

- Blue/grey dorsal surface.
- Sometimes light brown.
- Paler/white ventral surfaceⁱ.

BIOLOGY AND SIZE

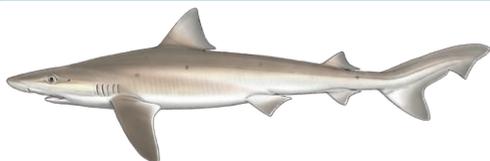
- Born: 30–35cm^v. Mature: 130–185cm ♀, 120–170cm ♂. Max TL: 195cm ♀, 175cm ♂ⁱⁱⁱ.
- Feeds on a wide variety of bony fish, elasmobranchs and squidⁱⁱ. Does not appear inclined to scavengeⁱⁱⁱ.
- Segregates by sex, except during mating periods^v.

TEETH

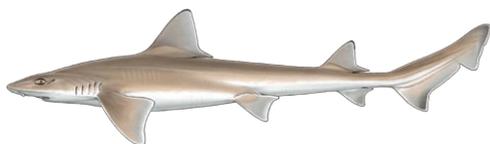


- Blade-like with oblique cusps and distal cuspletsⁱⁱⁱ.

SIMILAR SPECIES



- Galeorhinus galeus*, **Tope**



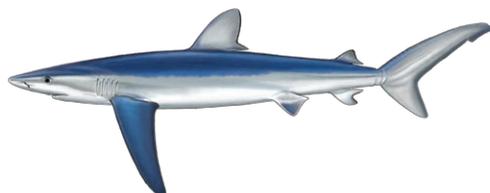
- Mustelus mustelus*, **Common Smoothhound**



- Mustelus asterias*, **Starry Smoothhound**



- Squalus acanthias*, **Spiny Dogfish**



- Prionace glauca*, **Blue Shark**

HABITAT

- Shallows to ~550m.
- Predominantly demersal but may be caught on pelagic longlinesⁱⁱ.
- Highly migratory, moving towards the poles during summerⁱⁱⁱ.

CONSERVATION STATUS

- Late maturity and low reproductive potential make Tope vulnerable to overfishingⁱ.
- Red List status:** Vulnerable (2005). Data Deficient in northeast Atlantic.

COMMERCIAL IMPORTANCE

- One of the most widely fished shark species.
- Regularly taken as bycatch and targeted where abundant.
- Flesh, fins and liver oil are all utilizedⁱ.
- Landings restricted in UK waters.

HANDLING

- Handle with care.
- Sharp teeth.
- Abrasive skin.

REFERENCES

- i. Barnes, M. K. S.; 2008. MBA.
- ii. Bester, C; Unknown. FLMNH.
- iii. Compagno, L. J. V.; 1984. FAO.
- iv. Shark Foundation; 2005.
- v. Walker, T. I. *et al*; 2006. IUCN Red List.